

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY GAINSHARING PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS GAINSHARING?

Gainsharing gives employees direct financial incentives for exceeding specific performance goals, which generate sustainable savings for the County through better use of labor, capital, materials and energy.

HOW DOES GAINSHARING WORK?

A department or work unit sets performance and financial savings or revenue enhancement goals and establishes a plan for achieving these goals. These are written into a gainsharing agreement, or memorandum of understanding (MOU). Provided that performance goals are met, a portion of savings or revenues realized beyond the established goal is distributed among employees.

HOW CAN I START A GAINSHARING PROJECT?

Although gainsharing involves departmental work units or even entire departments, any employee may propose a gainsharing agreement. Visit the County's gainsharing webpage at miamidade.gov/opi/gainsharing to access a Gainsharing Agreement Idea Worksheet. Prior to completing the worksheet, familiarize yourself with the "nuts and bolts" of gainsharing by reviewing the information on the webpage regarding current gainsharing agreements, including MOUs and other material. Then, complete and submit the worksheet as directed. If it is determined that your proposal should be pursued, a committee will be established to coordinate this effort. All gainsharing agreements are subject to approval of the Board of County Commissioners, the County Manager's Office, the Office of Strategic Business Management, and participating Departments.

CAN ALL DEPARTMENTS AND ALL EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATE IN GAINSHARING?

Some departments have funding or regulatory restrictions that limit the County's ability to pay employee bonuses. Such departments are encouraged to recommend alternatives to the County Manager for consideration.

County employees may receive bonuses regardless of employment status. However, employees must work at least six pay periods in the gainsharing program and have an evaluation of satisfactory or better during the agreement period to be eligible for an award. Bonuses are prorated to reflect the amount of time contributed by an employee toward achievement of program goals. Additional guidelines apply with regard to counseling, written reprimands, and suspensions, dismissals, demotions for disciplinary reasons, DAR appeals, criminal indictments

or investigations, and grand jury indictments; refer to Countywide Gainsharing Guidelines for details.

ARE THERE RULES GOVERNING GAINSHARING?

A set of Countywide Gainsharing Guidelines serves to promote a uniform and cooperative approach to gainsharing. The guidelines provide a blueprint for developing programs, establishing operating standards, performance criteria, roles and responsibilities, and determining employee participation and payout criteria. These guidelines were developed in collaboration with a working group of labor and management representatives and endorsed by the Efficiency and Competition Commission.

WHO SIGNS OFF ON GAINSHARING AGREEMENTS?

Typically, gainsharing MOUs are signed by the County Manager, the Director of the Office of Strategic Business Management, the department Director, and employee and union representatives, as appropriate. Gainsharing agreements must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LABOR IN GAINSHARING?

The Countywide Gainsharing Guidelines currently in effect were developed in collaboration with a working group of labor and management representatives. All gainsharing agreements must be in compliance and harmony with, and not supersede, alter or abridge, comprehensive labor contracts between Miami-Dade County and authorized employee organizations.

HOW ARE GAINSHARING DOLLARS DISTRIBUTED?

Each year a Closeout Committee calculates the extent to which the participants of a gainsharing program met its targets and calculates the amount of funds available for disbursement to eligible employees. Savings calculated during the closeout period generally are separated into three categories: a maximum of 25% of validated savings to be shared among employees, a maximum of 25% to be reserved for special use within the work unit or department, and the remainder to be reserved by the department to defray general fund support or to benefit ratepayers. Award amounts may be capped such that the entire gainsharing amount may not be distributed; caps are established based on the degree to which savings can be directly linked to employee performance.

WHAT IF SOMETHING BEYOND OUR CONTROL HAPPENS?

Gainsharing agreements must specify how uncontrollable events that affect performance are to be treated. As a rule, the Closeout Committee should assess employees' performance based on

factors directly within their control. Some types of expenses, savings and revenues that would not normally be eligible may be determined eligible based on specific circumstances.

HOW LONG ARE GAINSHARING PROGRAMS VALID?

The “Terms and Conditions” section of a gainsharing MOU should list the time period of the agreement. MOUs generally apply to multi-year periods, generally not to exceed five years. This allows participating work groups time to generate savings or to meet performance targets that may not be easily achievable during the earlier years. Additionally, a multi-year period provides employees with time to achieve their overall objectives and institute operational changes and work practices. It should be noted that targets may be re-examined during the annual closeout process and, if determined inappropriate to the purposes of the agreement, modified.